

Beat: Business

Police: Australian woman conned \$2 million out of lonely men

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USPA News - An Australian woman has been arrested after she allegedly used dating websites to scam more than 2.1 million Australian dollars (2 million U.S. dollars) out of elderly men, police said on Friday in what may be the country's first case of so-called romance fraud. The 39-year-old single mother of four, whose identity was not immediately disclosed, was arrested on Thursday morning when detectives executed search warrants at her two properties in southwest Sydney.

She was later charged with four counts of fraud and one count of money laundering. According to police, the woman used dating services between August 2008 and February 2014 to approach a number of men to fraudulently get money out of them. She is accused of forming relationships with at least four different men, two of whom are in their 70s while the other two are in their 60s. "In each case, the woman had approached the men via dating services with the stated intention of forming a relationship," a New South Wales (NSW) police spokesperson said. "However, shortly after establishing correspondence with the men, police will allege the woman would make false and misleading statements in order to convince them to deposit money into her account." Detectives said the woman would claim she needed money to pay for medical care for a sick relative, or funeral arrangements for a deceased relative. In other instances, she allegedly claimed she needed the money to pay bank fees that would allow her to access funds being provided by an overseas family member. One of the victims paid the woman a total of 1.9 million Australian dollars (1.76 million U.S. dollars) over the course of their relationship. The other three men paid her 190,000 Australian dollars (176,750 U.S. dollars), 58,000 Australian dollars (53,950 U.S. dollars), and 12,000 Australian dollars (11,160 U.S. dollars), respectively. Police said the woman had used the money obtained from her victims to buy a number of items that were seized during Thursday's search, including three vehicles: a Mazda CX7, a Toyota Prado and a Toyota Corolla. Detectives have also frozen more than \$1 million worth of cash and assets associated with the suspect. The woman was granted conditional bail to appear in court on June 25.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-2261/police-australian-woman-conned-2-million-out-of-lonely-men.html>

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